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A LITERARY NEWSPAPER

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The AMERICAN SPECTATOR

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EDITORIAL

ALTHOUGH the thing recurs with that tiresome regularity of which Nature alone is capable, it remains, nevertheless, a serious problem. In this not too merry month of July a young woman's fancy turns to sun-burn, oil and one-piece bathing suits. Now is the time when the skin you have to touch is made so repulsive that it will not be touchable again until November, when the last shreds of ultra violet decoration have happily faded and the marks of shoulder-straps have finally disappeared. Meanwhile, civilization has to pretend to seem as before. With the nostalgia of Winter in our veins, one tries to imagine that the swimming-pool is a substitute for the theatre, the concert hall, the speak-easy. Annually Man discovers that, however bad he may be, Nature is worse.

Consider merely the outrageous paradox of daylight-saving time. The simple agriculturist, who might, quite madly, derive some advantage from it, proves countless projects this urban device to defeat the inscrutable laws of the Almighty. If, as someone has remarked, Man was not made for the Sabbath, he was certainly not made for daylight saving time. His dinner clothes were not designed for such use, and the female finds that her make-up is not such as to withstand the double strain of sunlight and artificial light.

Even tobacco loses its charms in the Summertime, because one's favorite cigar or cigarette is exposed to the horrors of open air smoking. How one sighs on Bailey's Beach for a nice room, with the blinds drawn, and a comfortable chair in which to contemplate the spectacle of human existence. As the beach picnic looms up, how gratefully one thinks of the little room at the Colony, of the pleasant bar at the Ritz in Paris—away from the flies, cabanas, sand flies, mosquitoes. The ceaseless moan of the dolorous tide . . . the endless sportings of people who emulate the porpoise . . . the dreadful expanse of greensward over which stoutish gentlemen, in the ugliest clothes next to those of a baseball player, endeavor vainly to cure hangovers which are a mere matter of a pick-me-up and some onion soup in town.

If July is here, can Winter be far away? Alas, it can. We still have several months during which life is suspended. Still many weeks during which one will be brought to the point of exhaustion by waiting for Long Island trains in the air-proof catacombs of the Pennsylvania station, during which the mad scramble at Jamaica may conceivably land one at Far Rockaway or Arverne. Still many weeks during which insomnia will allow the privileged guest to assist at the early twitterings of little birds, and the impertinent rivetting of pertinacious woodpeckers. No sooner have the frogs proved their inability to croak as in Aristophanes than our feathered friends go through their routine of greeting the dawn. Dawn is one of those things that can be best contemplated in a New York taxi, as one retires gracefully to the soothing hum of the Elevated and the reassuring, rather romantic clop-pety-clop of the milkman's wagon.

There are cities in which a desire for the ocean, the lake, the mountain, is, if not justifiable, at least excusable. New York, however, is a city which has definitely put Nature in its place. The most completely urbanized, man-made city in the world, it is such an obvious improvement on Nature that it is hard to believe that anyone should ever want to leave it, save under pressure. Very naturally, all the exits are unpleasant and the penalty for infidelity is drastic. In the hottest period, coolth is provided by thoughtful and resourceful electricians. One can retire with a good book to one of the gentlemen's rest rooms in any of the more recherché movie houses and bask in a temperature of sixty degrees, while outside pavements sizzle and backs are being blistered at Southampton. If one has an eye for color, then the lengthening shadows of a Summer night in New York streets, the *Alpenglühen* which makes the buildings in the setting sun more lovely than the Matterhorn, cause the heart to rejoice. Why see the world, when you can look at Manhattan from the George Washington Bridge, or the Staten Island Ferry?

AMERICAN AUTHORS AND ENGLISH REVIEWERS

by FRANK SWINNERTON

A NUMBER of American writers are under the impression that English reviewers deliberately belittle American books. This is a mistake. Such writers are often exasperated to find that a favorite author, like wine drunk with relish in its own land, does not travel well. But there is a considerable misunderstanding of the point of view of literary critics in England; and this I will endeavor to correct.

In the first place, literary reputation in England is largely social. I remember being told by Gilbert Cannan that when he was at Cambridge University he heard reports of a wonderful youth who was at Rugby (the public school), and who was coming to Cambridge later. When Cannan had left Cambridge, and was in London, he heard of a wonderful young man who had arrived at Cambridge and was shortly expected to reach London. The young man—in each case it was the same young man—was Rupert Brooke. He finally reached London with a reputation already made.

This is a simple instance, but it will show what I mean. If a young man whose father has been wealthy enough to send him to a first-class English public school shows any kind of literary talent, news of it travels fast. He goes to his university double-starred, and at once enters the literary sets there. In due time he descends upon London with an immediate right of entry to literary sets in the capital. His reputation has preceded him. If he has talent, the path to a restricted fame is wide open. If he has little talent, but an eye to the main chance, he attaches himself to somebody rather more talented, and achieves a minor literary job. A little money will always help him into the publishing trade, where his previously formed literary connections will be of use.

If our young man has genuine talent, the flying start he has received will carry him quickly to eminence. He can then be prosperous, if he wishes, or he can be very refined, very fastidious, very costive, and extraordinarily respected. If his social manners are good, so that he is seen everywhere, and is welcomed as a rising star in the best drawing-rooms, he will be assured of great contemporary fame. And all the friends he has made through his early life at his public school and university will instinctively rally to their distinguished colleague, both in society and in the press. They will know him and admire him; but they will also be influenced by a desire for reflected distinction, and will praise him with loud hymns.

This praise is not disingenuous. If a man has been educated according to an established convention, if he has been taught by the same masters, the same tutors, the same professors, he will sympathize with work colored by that convention and by the set of ideas with which he is familiar. He praises whatever is acceptable to him; and if he has pretensions to æsthetic judgment will find appropriate superlatives without strain.

Not every young man, however, can prosper in this way. A young provincial, for example, who comes to town with no reputation at all, and who wishes to be a leading writer, has a longer apprenticeship to serve. His name is unknown; he has no family connections or social prestige; he is a sort of literary poor relation. He is the boy who gets the small type notices in the *Times Literary Supplement*. He is the boy who sometimes gets no notices at all in the critical press. It is to nobody's interest to bring him to the surface and spread the good news of his arrival in town. This is where the writer with the ready-made reputation scores.

Now, my suggestion is that when an American writer sees in the English press some unpleasant or extremely sharp notice of an American book, he jumps to the conclusion that another insult is being offered to the Stars and Stripes. Nothing of the sort is intended. But the author of an American book, like the English provincial author, has no social reputation by which he can be ranged and judged. Nobody knows him. Nobody has watched him grow up. Who is he, anyway? What has he done?

Well, he has written this book, you say. True enough; but in England fourteen thousand new books are published each year. Is it not clear that when a reviewer who has been properly educated has attended to the claims of his own literary class, and the people who cannot be ignored, the rest, the canaille as it were, must take their chance? The rest are English as well as American; Australian, New Zealandish, and Canadian—any writers, in fact, who have no cheer-leaders, or private reputation, or linguistic snob appeal. It may be unfortunate for them that they have not been embraced by the literary *ton*. But there is no animosity to American books as such. If they are unreadable, indeed, they have an excellent prospect of being extolled.

The Editors, having been told that the late war was not endorsed by the Real German People and now being told that Hitlerism is not endorsed by the Real German People, herewith offer $7.25 for a sufficient definition of the Real German People.

OPEN EPISTLE TO JEHOVAH

by MORRIE RYSKIND

Dear Jehovah:

You will pardon this informal greeting, but You see the Ryskinds—Your records will confirm this—have been Jews for goodness knows how many centuries, and I always think of You as one of the family. Your name has been a byword in our household for generations and, although You haven't been around lately, they still talk of the times You used to come around and visit the *mespocha*. My late grandfather, one of Your more fervent admirers, never got tired telling me of the days You went walking with Noah and the long talks You had with Moses; and many's the laugh (reverent, understand me) we had together over the time Abraham beat You down from fifty righteous to ten. Of course I realize that Abraham didn't really get anything out of it because, as I recall the story, You went right ahead and destroyed the cities. Nevertheless I liked the principle of the thing.

I could go on like that forever, but it would just be an old story to You. I just wanted to make it clear that Your works have left a distinct impression on the Ryskinds. And when I say Your works, I mean Your works and none of this New Testament stuff. Oh, I'm not denying that occasionally one of the boys would turn agnostic, but—so far, at any rate—there hasn't been a Reformed Jew in the bunch. And that's a pretty good record for the Chosen People, if I do say it.

And, speaking of the Chosen People, *that's* what I wanted to talk to You about. What I mean is, I'm wondering whether it wouldn't be possible for us to keep on being Jews and still not be the Chosen People. Please don't misunderstand me, Lord. I'm deeply appreciative of the honor you conferred on us. And it would have been all right if You alone had chosen us.

But You know what happened. After You chose us, it got to be the vogue. The first thing we knew, everybody was choosing us. There was that time in Egypt when the Pharaohs needed some slaves—so they chose us. And then the Babylonians and the Greeks and the Romans all chose us. And the Spanish Inquisition. And then the Russians. And now it's Hitler.

Of course we don't mean to be rude and we're deeply grateful to all these people, but all these social functions cut into our work terribly. There's always so much to be done—especially in these days—and a fellow simply can't do his best work when he's been out late to a *pogrom* the night before. I don't want to be narrow-minded about it: I'm not saying that a *pogrom* once in a while isn't a good thing, but right now it's two and three *pogroms* a week—and how long can anybody keep that up?

So if You could find it convenient to just lay off us for a little while—say a century or two—we'd be very much obliged. If You could choose some *goyim* for a change, we could probably get some things done in this cock-eyed world. And when I say *goyim*, I don't mean just *schwarze*, either. *They've* got it tough enough now.

Such a moratorium might give Einstein a chance to work out something in science. Furthermore, it might stop Ludwig Lewisohn from writing about the Jewish problem. Ludwig is a brilliant writer, but we all have begun to wish he would find himself a new theme song. If that's all we got out of it, it would be worth while.

Hoping You can see Your way clear to comply with this request, I beg to remain,

Yours respectfully,

Morrie Ryskind.

DICTATORS INCORPORATED

(The market up to 3 p.m.)

Ghandi	172	(plus a stomach pump)
Kemal Pasha	103	(and 1 pack of Camels)
Stalin	99	
Calles	98	
Mussolini	91	(and 1 brass band)
Herriot	47	(quotation subject to change without notice)
Ramsay Macdonald	23	
Pilsudski	11	
Matsuoaka	3	(in silver)
Hitler	1	share Goldman-Sachs
de Valera	2	passes to Minsky's Burlesque
South American Dictators (gross)	3.2	

The Editors, gentlemen of the old school, regret their inability to share the rejoicings of the younger generation over the new legalized potations of the bourgeoisie.

MOSTLY MERIDIONAL

by BRANCH CABELL

INASMUCH as I can think of no civil way of avoiding the intrusion, I must now write to you, my dear sir, that, should you call at four o'clock to-morrow afternoon, your advent will be to me a source of considerable pleasure; and that with unbounded delight I will then "give" the newspaper interview for which you have misguidedly asked. The affair is thus settled. And yet it really does seem rather an unexhilarating manner of wasting our time.

I am virtually sure of this because, under varying names, and wearing slightly different very young faces, you have called on me aforetime, very, very often, at the bidding of one or another of the local papers. Your questions (during the last twenty-five years) have varied in their objectives, but never in their depth and seriousness and futility. Nor indeed have they varied widely. Not ever, for example, during the last twenty-five years, has any representative of the Virginian press failed to inquire, "What will be the future trend of literature in the South?" and, "Whom do you consider to have the most promising future among our younger Southern writers?" I am forlornly convinced therefore that, at not later than two minutes after four to-morrow afternoon, you also, my dear sir, will have asked me both these questions, quite gravely.

Not at all will your polite summons to unveil the future perturb me. I shall face both queries (I can assure you) without replying "Alackaday!" or *"Miserrime!"* or even *"Ototoi!"* For whensoever anybody, in any walk of life, is "interviewed," then as a matter of course he is called on to prophesy. It is possible to unfold no morning paper without facing a half-column instance or so of magnates vaticinating as to next month's stock market and the next quarter's upswing, or of tourists just off the gang-plank who are reassuringly conversant with Europe's future (specializing, at this present moment, in the destinies of Russia and of Germany), or of realtors lyric over the impendent boom in real estate. And what publicist anywhere (save only, perhaps, Mr. Roosevelt) remains ignorant as to what the President intends to do next? It seems but fair that in this welter of omniscience the most obtuse of writers should know all about the future of literature in the South.

So I shall not reply to these perennial questions truthfully, "I don't know." To admit any such nescience would be humiliating beyond human endurance, I reflect, so long as at least a dozen persons continue to subscribe to the *New Republic*, and thus find all future happenings made plain as an equal number of pike-staves. I dislike appearing unique in my ignorance. I prefer to hedge; I elect to answer all "interviewers" with a civil pretense of taking them seriously: and therefore, at two minutes after four o'clock to-morrow afternoon, I shall attempt to disguise (in resonant and shifty babblings, modeled after the general style of the New York *Times*' editorial page) my lack of any firm interest in literary trends or in any of our younger Southern writers.

II

It is not that even in my most private thoughts I disparage these matters. I mean only that, if any author dared venture into printed frankness, I would have to say to you, necessarily, that it was my appointed task to construct the Biography of the Life of Manuel. I was thus forced (I would continue) throughout the passing away of a highly enjoyable twenty-eight years, to run counter to all current literary trends, and to disregard them. You question me (I would point out) as to a subject with which I have cultivated, resolutely, throughout twenty-eight years, all possible unacquaintance. Inasmuch as I have never taken holy orders, I do not believe that complete ignorance of the topic in hand can peculiarly qualify me to dispose of it with authority.

Even so, I prefer to be fair. I remark that, perhaps throughout the entire South, but most certainly in the State of Virginia, the liberal arts now flourish to an unprecedented extent. Mr. Charles Gilpin, the noted actor, who but lately created the title rôle of "The Emperor Jones," I would remind you, was a native born Virginian. So, I believe, was Miss Peggy Hopkins Joyce. Mr. Bill Robinson, the famous tap dancer, is yet another jewel—as one should say, a black diamond—in the cultural diadem of Virginia. In still another field of æsthetics may Virginia point with maternal pride to that gifted cantatrice, Miss Kate Smith. And in what state, I demand of the welkin, was reared and nurtured Mr. Freeman Gosden, that pre-eminent exponent of Pepsodent's never-ending *comédie humaine?* Echo answers, I admit, "Maine." But her answer is not true. The world knows that Mr. Gosden likewise is a native-born Virginian.

Do not think me a mere boaster, in the best Southern tradition! It is needful for a Virginian thus to catalogue at the top of his voice these finer flowers of our present-day cultural renaissance. And my point is not merely that all these Virginian artists prospered through the simple and unarduous recipe of leaving Virginia. What seems to me far more important, and more instructive, and more full of promise as concerns the future, is the attested fact that Virginia nowadays honors her leading artists liberally. Did Charles, the great emperor, stoop to pick up the brush of Titian? With a celerity no less imperial or gleaming, so often as Miss Smith delights Virginia with a visit, does the Governor of Virginia, attended by his gold-braided staff, arise very early in the morning to meet her Pullman with plenary homage. And when Mr. Robinson frequents Richmond-in-Virginia, then even in the lobby of our most fashionable hotel is Mr. Bill Robinson to be seen dancing nimbly with this or the other fair Caucasian maiden, his pupil, amid the respectful applause of our city's élite, so properly have we learned to esteem the art of M. Robinson as weighed against yesterday's taboos.

Concerning the enthusiasm with which Virginia greets the most widely known of her children, Mr. Gosden, I can but remark that it staggers belief and checks traffic in the public highways. It does not seem enough that *en grande tenue* the citizens of Richmond have conferred upon this all-conqueror the appropriate gift of a sword. The pomps of that chivalrous ceremony did but feebly indicate our fond and inexpressible pride in the most famous of living Virginians. Everywhither do such throngs attend the passing of our supreme artist that (as you will no doubt remember, my dear sir) when with his confrère he last entered a Richmond bank it was found needful to put a placard in the window explaining that no "run" on the establishment was in progress, but that "Amos 'n' Andy" were inside.

We Virginians have taken, in short, the main step toward autochthonous art: we have evolved, we have learned to revere, our own æsthetic.

III

With the cultural ideals of the South in a condition thus thriving, I do not doubt that in the late Confederacy literature will begin, by-and-by, to share with her sister arts in public esteem. I look forward, in fact, to the time when every Southern household of the better class will contain its book as well as its electric refrigerator; when painters and musicians will be regarded in the South almost as seriously as aldermen; when its statuary will serve needs not wholly canine; and when Southerners will accord in brief to the career of every kind of creative artist a quota of condonation.

My point is merely that the dawn of this approvable day is not, not quite as yet apparent. And so I admit that, to my finding, for any young Southerner to commence author, just at present, does show such disregard for the opinions of his more mature and better-thought-of neighbors as (even before I have looked over his book and decided that, after all, I do not have to read it) does prejudice me as to his mental balance. One who forfeits thus wantonly the respect of his daily associates, and of his abashed family, is not, I reflect, the exact person with whom the judicious would foregather, even in print. So I do, it may be, avoid the books of our younger Southern writers somewhat more expeditiously than I shy away from the newest balderdash by oncoming American authors spawned in some other section of the Republic. I do it unconsciously, because of my respect for the common-sense standards of my own better-thought-of neighbors.

I shall say no one of these things to-morrow afternoon, although I believe you would sympathize did I become thus loquacious. As behooves a normally intelligent and well-reared young Southerner, you also are no whit interested in such flimsy makeshifts for personal rapture, and for personal experience, and for personal notions, as literature keeps in stock. You prefer these substitutes at a higher voltage in the moving pictures. You are being sent me-ward, by an irrational city editor, to get a "story" out of our talk to-morrow afternoon, a "story" which will appear unobtrusively, some four days later, interning my alleged "philosophy of life" along with my portrait very far inside the paper, between the quips of the local humorist and the day's special bargains at the cut-rate drugstore. And I am abetting you because of my publisher's firm belief that such not-ever-read reading-matter makes valuable "publicity" which will enable him (so lively is the Baptist faith) to sell books in remunerative quantities on the south side of the Potomac.

The impendent "interview," in brief, must be for both of us a nuisance to be endured restively. We two are the victims of circumstance. None can help us. Nobody will help us. We can but try to make our shared boredom as lenient as may prove possible, with the aid of a few *hors d'œuvres*, and of Ravished Virgin cocktails, and of much continuous cigarette smoking, in the while we discuss the future trend of Southern literature, and which one of our younger Southern writers has the most promising future, in the North.

THE WORST BOOK OF THE MONTH

BROADCAST MINDS. By Ronald Knox

5 x 7½. Pp. 280. $2.50

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STRAVINSKY AND PICASSO

by BORIS DE SCHLOEZER

A RECENT French concert was devoted entirely to the violin compositions of Stravinsky. The composer and the violinist Doushkin played a suite from the ballet "Pulchinella", a concert duet for violin and piano, and a series of arrangements from "The Nightingale," "The Fire-Bird" and "Petruchka."

I have frequently had occasion to write about Stravinsky—not only because each new work of his is an event in the musical life of our time, but also because Stravinsky's music as a whole remains to this day somewhat enigmatic. More articles and monographs have been devoted to him than to any of his contemporaries; indeed, they would fill a library; yet always we feel in his creations the presence of certain specific traits that defy analysis. We find those who have already expressed themselves on the subject returning to it again and again, with a sense of the inadequacy of their previous observations.

Between the art of Stravinsky and that of his contemporaries there is an essential difference. How far apart, for instance, are Schoenberg and Debussy, yet the works of both fit into our own conception of music, whereas Stravinsky's work in no wise fits into that conception. What is the reason? It seems to me that Picasso can be of some help to us in this connection. He occupies in contemporary painting a position closely analogous to that of Stravinsky in music. Critics have more than once associated these two names, but it was only at Picasso's last exhibition that I myself realized how close the bond between them is. On that occasion André Lhote remarked in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* that Picasso paints not "d'après nature" but "après la peinture"; that his imagination and creative gift come into existence, so to speak, through contact with art and not with reality; that they emanate from already existing works, simplified, complicated, or fundamentally reconstructed, as the artist sees fit. Is this not also true of Stravinsky? If music proves to be the reaction of man to reality and serves as an answer to the pressing problems and exigencies which life presents, then Stravinsky's art is a reaction to music. For Picasso, life is like a huge museum containing all the plastic forms ever invented by man. One might think that reality for Stravinsky is a union of sound-forms elaborated by humanity. Hence the a-human rather than non-human character of his work—especially of the later work, for his art is a product of that which was already art.

As a result of this double transposition, this double filtration, there remains no atom of psychological content in Stravinsky's work. Sound systems are presented to us which possess only an æsthetic existence and belong to a closed world, deprived of any connection with reality. Does not the enigmatic peculiarity of Stravinsky's art lie in this: that it is art raised to the second power, the product of a double process of grafting—in other words, a reflection not on life but on culture?

The most extraordinary thing about it is that neither Picasso nor Stravinsky has ever been reproached with "Alexandrinism"; they are neither compilers, nor rhetoricians, nor grammarians, but original composers. And does not their activity bear witness to some sort of crisis in our artistic culture? Does not danger lurk in such a decisive divorcement from life? Is not an art condemned, which has become its own theme?

That this danger already exists in the case of Stravinsky, I can no longer doubt since listening to "The Kiss of the Fairy," "Capriccio," and this whole violin concert. When Stravinsky created from folk themes, from Bach, from Glinka, he did not stylize; he gave us an original creative work. Now he stylizes even himself, and falls into Alexandrinism, producing works masterful, of course, and of consummate beauty (in this respect the duet is vastly superior to the concerto)—but nevertheless lifeless.

It is, of course, absurd to demand that an artist must constantly renew himself. He may sometimes return to the past, and take up an already used theme, may frankly repeat with variations something he has already done, either for his own pleasure and recreation, as a pastime, or, on the contrary, in order to enter more deeply into it. But with Stravinsky it is not a pastime—he rationally and systematically exploits the wealth he already has, like a careful husbandman, leaving nothing unused.

There was a time when the composer found himself in direct contact with human art, if not with life, but now he has retired into his own music, which by its very nature is incapable of feeling the creative impulse. The great classics and romantics could repeat themselves, because their creations were not deprived of psychological roots. But Stravinsky's art, like any purely æsthetic repeated manifestation, can not feed on its own sap.

Recollecting how German books were burned on American campuses during the late war, the Editors congratulate Dr. Hitler on that sincerest form of flattery—imitation.

Will Durant

RUNAWAYS

by LOUIS ADAMIC

I BECAME acquainted with several of them on the boat which took me to Europe last Spring, and other travelers who have gone over even more recently tell me they have found them on their ships, too.

On my trip, Mr. M——, a Mid-Western manufacturer, started a conversation with me the first day out from New York. He was in his late fifties, rather well preserved, a typical-looking Rotarian. He wore a golden service-club emblem on his golden watch-chain; on his coat lapel was an Elk pin; and he had a Mason ring around one of his fingers.

Almost the first thing he said to me was, "My son—that's him over there, in the second deck-chair: he likes to sit in the sun—he and I got tired of the Depression, of hearing all the talk about it, of answering 'phone calls from people in need of help which we couldn't render, of seeing our well-to-do friends go broke, of feeling our own purse-strings tighten in the face of it all—so we decided, he and I, to take a little vacation and make a trip on a comfortable nice boat and forget all about business and troubles for a while. You know the old song, 'Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag'? Well, sir, we, my son and I, packed up our troubles"—he laughed a little, palpably pleased with his cleverness—"and we left the old kit-bag back home with my brother-in-law (my wife's been dead now for ten years) and put him in charge of the plant and office. There's nothing doing to speak of, anyhow. In good times we employed as many as 280 people; now all we have is 27 on the payroll."

In the ensuing days he told several people on the ship about the old kit-bag. Forgetting he had already told it to me, he repeated it to me the third day out.

I asked him what he thought was the answer to the current situation in the United States.

"Well, sir," he replied, "I'm not worried about it. We've hit a snag; we're in a depression, but we had 'em before. I remember a couple of them myself. Depressions come and go. Economic cycle, you know. This one came and it'll go—sure as day follows night. The country is sound at the core. Sound as a bell. . . . We need to have only faith in ourselves, in our country. Our traditions, our institutions are sound. Sound as a bell," he repeated.

He didn't know where he and his son would go after landing. They had their cars with them. They probably would just drive around for two or three months and see Old Yurrup. Maybe they would stop somewhere in Switzerland awhile, because they heard a lot of people there spoke English. They would return to the United States early in the Fall. By then things probably would begin to pick up.

I spoke with his son, who looked very much like his dad. He wore the same style of clothes. From his golden watch-chain dangled a golden Kiwanis emblem; on his coat lapel was an Elk pin; around one of his fingers, a Mason ring. He was less inclined to talk than the old man, perhaps out of deference to him. . . . "All we need," he said, "is faith in ourselves, in the country. The country is all right, sound at the core. Sound as a bell. . . ."

Mrs. W——was a middle-aged, semi-hysterical woman from Cleveland. A widow. She told my wife she was going to Europe to save money. At home the demands on her resources, which had shrunk considerably, were greater every month. She was the sort, she said, that could not refuse a request. In self-defense she was leaving the United States for a few months. By the time she returned conditions might improve. Did my wife think they would?

"If they don't," she said, "oh, good heavens!"

With Mr. J——, a young New York stockbroker, I became acquainted toward the end of the voyage. He was twenty-nine, he told me, but looked thirty-nine. Nervous. His lips often twitched in an uncertain smile. Apropos of nothing in particular, he said, "Life in the United States, in New York especially, is crazy. When you're in business, you're almost bound to develop a bunch of business and personal friends; some are personal and business at the same time. Then you get to be a slave to your friends. There's the social life. You have a hot time while you can hold up under it. Out every night. Dinners—theatres—midnight suppers—night clubs. Women. They have nothing to do all day, or rather all night, but chase around, and as a gentleman you can't turn 'em down. There are week-ends, which last from Friday till Monday, even till Tuesday. You gotta spend money and when you spend money in New York you gotta spend a lot of it. To spend a lot of it, you gotta have a lot of it—it's the only way to be happy in New York; anyhow, what is called happy in New York. And to have lots of money nowadays you gotta be lucky and hustle like hell—you gotta rush around, make new contacts, make more friends, and so on, and so on, till you don't know where you're at and what it's all about. And when you're going on thirty, as I am, you're played out; or damnear to it. You have a hell of a good time, sure, while it lasts—then blooie!"

He said he was making this trip all by himself To Get Away From It All, and he smiled. He didn't know how long he would stay in Europe; maybe six months, maybe longer. "What the hell!"

T. S. Eliot: 3.2 Lacrima Christi.

EDUCATING THE DRAMA

by GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

A FAVORITE retort to the critic when he finds fault with a play is, if he doesn't like it, why didn't he write a better one himself. Contrary to the critic's usual lofty disdain of what he pleases himself to regard as a mere sample of vaudeville facetia, there is something in the challenge. It sometimes happens, of course, that the critic is kept so busy with his job reviewing bad plays that he hasn't the time to write the better ones demanded of him. But, nevertheless, he should have enough time occasionally to tell the writers of the bad plays how he would have written them and made of them, perhaps, something better than they are.

Considering the season lately concluded and confronted, for example, by a poor play like Mr. Sidney Howard's "Alien Corn," the critic should not experience much difficulty in pointing out to Mr. Howard how he would have improved upon it by spraying its theme with a measure of observational intelligence. That theme, you may recall, concerns a young woman pianist of Viennese blood who, set down among the people of a small college town in the American Middle West, finds the air stifling to artistic temperament, finds too a comprehensive lack of sympathy and understanding and encouragement, and packs off in despair to Vienna, there presumably to find in turn everything that has been missing to her and her work. What we have here, obviously, is the plainest and stalest theatrical hokum: the theory, so intently fondled by the Harvard boys among our playwrights, that the American atmosphere—and that in the Middle West particularly—is suffocating to artistic enterprise and that, contrastedly, Europe is just so much grand oxygen.

As anyone with half an eye's experience or with a measure of playwriting imagination should appreciate, patronage and encouragement of artists—especially completely bogus ones—are often so excessive (in certain sections of the Middle West particularly) that the situation almost skirts the coasts of burlesque. The pushing Babbittry and its wives, the new-rich of cities and small towns, the culture-seekers and the social-seekers, all strain to identify themselves with the arts and their practitioners. Any player of chop-sticks, provided only he have a name that sounds vaguely Polack, fingers six inches long and hair sixteen, returns from the Middle West with his digestive tract and kidneys completely ruined by the over-enthusiasms of hospitality. In Vienna, the fellow would have to buy even his own coffee. So, rewriting Mr. Howard's play, the critic would bequeath to it both novelty and honesty, and some modern intelligence, by deleting all of its present sentimental fraudulence and bringing the young woman pianist from present-day Vienna, which is as dead as a door-nail so far as any kind of artistic encouragement and sympathy goes and where she had found herself stifled, into the sympathy and encouragement of the Ittle American Babbitt college town. That, too, might be hokum of a sort, one admits, but at any rate it would not wear the beard of the Howard brand.

Miss Susan Glaspell's "The Comic Artist," another poor play, dealt with an artist who, now married, encounters again the young woman with whom he once had an affair in Paris and is again drawn sexually to her, the resulting fermentation—negotiated in a barn!—bringing tragic misery to his patient wife, to himself, to the younger woman and to the latter's spouse, his brother. All this, the author—despite the calendar hint that we are living in the year 1933—handled with an Ibsenish gravity. While it is apparent that the theme is more properly, at this day, suited to farce or light comedy, I shall not make the point, as it has come to be a cliché of criticism that takes the easiest way out of such matters. Let us therefore, for the moment, concur in Miss Glaspell's notion that her theme must be treated with a straight face. How then to illuminate it?

The character of the artist's wife, as drawn by Miss Glaspell, is a more or less understanding woman, no longer young and silly. One would accordingly have rewritten the last act and while allowing some natural indignation to remain the portion of the betrayed young woman's husband (the artist's younger brother), would have brought the artist's wife to chuckle quietly over her own husband's supreme idiocy in allowing himself to be dragged into the inevitable disillusion of a resumed old affair, particularly, and above all, one that had had Paris as its origin. His own moral qualms, contrition and disappointment would only add fuel to her laughter and, on that laughter, now loud and philosophically merry, the curtain would come down. All this would fail to make the play a good one, true, but it would make it a slightly less outmoded and dull one than it presently is.

In "We, the People," Elmer Rice confected a propaganda diatribe against various phases of American injustice. It failed of all conviction because its examples and propaganda were uniformly and unremittingly of the hit-'em-in-the-jaw, steam-shovel school. If, bribed with a sufficient number of authentic beers, the critic had been wheedled into writing the same basic play, he would have made it infinitely more convincing and effective by completely reversing the propaganda scheme, that is, by ironically arguing the absurdity of the charges of injustice, the full truth of which would at all times thus be doubly apparent to and impressed upon the auditors. Even a sardonic *compère*, added to Mr. Rice's play as it stands and made to interrupt the indignant action at intervals with good-natured and suavely humorous defenses of capitalism, would, without damaging its thesis in the slightest, remove the overdose of rancor from it and help it immeasurably.

A final example: the play called "Men Must Fight," by the Messrs. Lauren and Lawrence. The theme here was Edition No. 27 of Galsworthy's "The Mob" and of the various other plays, fore and aft, contending that, for all a man's belief in pacifism, the waving of flags and rattle of war drums will upset and heat him to the point of putting on a uniform and rushing off to fight. The author's coda consisted in the distaff argument that the only way to stop men's nonsense in this direction was for women to refuse to have any more male babies (the authors apparently being privy to some new scientific method for predetermining sex). Although the play was greeted as something very recherché by many of the critics who in their excitement evidently forgot all about Galsworthy, Lysistrata, et al., it occurs to one of their number that a relatively newer and more entertaining play might have been fashioned out of the idea of men of various ages who have fought in various wars, who have learned their single lesson and who, when the drums sound again the call to battle, rush up to the attic, jump into their old uniforms, hurry back to the windows downstairs, and give the brave boys marching proudly past to the thrilling strains of a half dozen national anthems one joint, vociferous, fervid and very elegant raspberry.

THE INTELLIGENTSIA AND THE BATHROOM

by NANCY HALE

"Life is magnificent here. People really think and feel, instead of concerning themselves, as Americans do, with ridiculous practicalities like whether there are enough bathrooms."

—Excerpt from a letter written from Rapallo.

THE intellectuals say a great many tiresome things, and not one of the least tiresome is the nonsense they talk about the American bathroom. When I say the "intellectuals," I refer to those souls who have been told that their (rather) unhealthy agility of mind makes them more amusing than anybody else, and who have somehow accepted this as proof that the rest of the world must be right, with the result that quite nice parties of people with perfectly well-arranged lives will break out into a spasm of excitement when the cry goes up, "Hurrah! The intellectuals are coming!"

The ancient Duchess of Sutherland once put Voltaire in his place when, in writing her memoirs for her, he ventured to question one of her opinions. That blue-blooded lady ran after the Frog, chasing him through her drawing-rooms, hurling her red wig after him, and crying, "Monsieur Voltaire! Monsieur Voltaire! I thought you was a man of sense, but I see you are only a philosopher or a poet." Those were the days when birth was birth, and grammar was only grammar.

Since that sane epoch, the writers have been allowed to forget that they are really no more than the jesters upon the steps of those who were born great, and not only the great but the quietly respectable have forgotten it too. This pretty pass permits that feckless crew to shower cheap abuse upon the bathroom, a charming and valuable institution appreciated by sensible folk with well-ordered lives. Only a philosopher or a poet could find anything the matter with it.

The truth is that the intellectuals are in the custom of treating the whole world as a bathroom, and so it is no wonder that they have no praise for a private chamber set aside for self-examination and personal Katharsis. The intellectuals air their least opinions, cry, turn moody, and indulge in orgies of audible introspection in every public place, in every city of the world; in drawing-rooms and railroad stations. Decent people reserve such egotistical self-expression for a few happy, solitary moments in the bathroom. For a nation of persons respectful of the rights of others, the bathroom is a sanctuary.

The bathroom is the only place where a well brought up person can go to drop the enforced conventions of the social system. He can sing in his bath, he can ponder, he can have his own little private speculations on the nature of the universe. For the average woman, the bathroom is the only haven where, in a busy house, she can repair for a good cry. The inner life, the unfolding of the subconscious, the enriching of the psyche: these can only flourish in solitude, and for the good citizen the only solitude is in the bathroom.

The intellectual is such an introvert, such a selfish creature, that he doesn't even appreciate the honest reticence of the "ordinary" person toward his private life: he never concerns himself with the right of Man not to be inflicted with man. In New York he shouts his opinions aloud; in Paris he puts his head on a boulevard café table and groans; from Rome he writes letters back to America, cursing its civilization, saying he would rather have one Giotto than a thousand ridiculous American bathrooms. But if from this simple, un-self-impressed Republic a new Giotto should ever arise, the chances are a hundred to one that all his fire and most of his genius will have blossomed in the hours when his mind turned in upon itself, in the blessed solitude of the American bathroom.

The Editors wish to congratulate Dr. Henry Seidel Canby on supplying, in his eminent Saturday Review of Literature, a "Personals" advertising service rivalling that in either La Vie Parisienne or L'Amour.

THE DILEMMA OR SILENUS IN DIXIE

by JOEL SAYRE

THE editor of a prosperous weekly magazine to whom I lately tried to sell some fiction muttered a little and then told me to go and read O. Henry. "There was the boy that could turn out the stories!" he said. "There was the boy that could write! That's what we're all waiting for: another O. Henry."

It was more than twenty years after O.'s death when the editor made this statement. For a few days I contemplated taking an O. Henry story, changing the title and the names and the slang and the topical allusions, and sending it to the editor's magazine under a bogus by-line. I know that it would have been rejected because none of the short stories printed in his magazine has ever been anything but straightaway, nearly plotless stuff in the modern manner: middle-aged women sadly aware that they are losing their *mnyuh;* frustrated, timid little men always trying unsuccessfully to do right or getting involved in dreadful difficulties quite innocently; stupid couples who live in family hotels and eat in speaks without realizing they are speaks; drunken monologues in Tony's by bitchy girls bawling out their boy friends—these and kindred themes are run week after week. Now and then there is a story about a socially impossible person or a group of socially impossible persons, or again there may be one about a Negro maid or a manicuress. Some of these stories are pretty good. Others are just the same old dabba-dooba. But never, never the slightest sign of an O. Henry will you find among them.

I did not send the phony O. Henry to the magazine because the editor who advised me to go and read him does not handle the fiction that is printed in it. He handles the non-fiction and leaves the fiction to his associates who do not at all care for the kind of narrative known as "trick." But even if this editor, personally, had accepted an only slightly disguised O. Henry, it would have been a childish jape at best.

Later it occurred to me that he might have been kidding, or that he merely wanted to get rid of an importunate aspirant. I checked up on this. Not at all: he really did and still does believe that what this country needs is another O. Henry. Since then I have encountered other editors, editors of slick paper magazines (the periodicals those strange birds, the Literary Agents, refer to in their professional way as "The Smooths") and they too talked with swimming eyes. Honestly, the number of editors in this country who would have cut off their right arms for another O. Henry is beyond belief. You'd be amazed.

Well, I have decided that, if that's the way they feel about it, it's stupid not to make a try for all that money as long as it's there, practically for the asking; and what's more, I've got a plot which I think would make a perfect corker of an O. Henry story. The working title is "The Dilemma," but that's just the working title. It needn't stand. O. Henry was great on setting his stories in a local atmosphere of some kind: in the South or the Wild West or Central America or Bagdad-on-the-Subway or some place like that. If we set this story of ours in the South I have more than half a mind to call it "Silenus in Dixie" or perhaps "A Dixie Silenus." If we decide to set it in New England, maybe some such title as "A Satyr in Scituate" or "Satyriasis in Scituate" would do. But we needn't decide on the title until last. Our job is to get the story written. There's a thousand in it, I feel sure, and don't forget the O. Henry Memorial Award coming up next year, either.

Anyway, here's the plot.

II

The story is told by a quaint old rural character. We could have him a Southerner or a New Englander, depending on which dialect is easier to write in. I can write pretty good breezy Middle Western if I have to, because I was raised out there; but when I try to write Southern or New England, they both look alike on paper, save for the presence or absence of the "you-alls." For instance the word "church": a Southerner's pronunciation of that word is different from a New Englander's; but if you are writing dialect for either you've got to spell it "chuch", which leads to confusion on the part of some readers. If you write "chuch," and put it in the mouth of a Southern character, and a Southern reader reads it, he will say to himself: "Shucks! This heah writuh's a fake. He-all's havin' a Southun pusson talk like a dayum Yayunkee." Or take the words "fellow" and "cellar." If you were making the quaint old rural character a New Englander and had him say: "By crack, et's a hot day. Be right nice ef a fullah c'd go set in a cullah (sullah) on a day like this," the magazine that printed it would have subscriptions cancelled from Eastport to Darien. And this is the kind of thing we've got to watch. Perhaps we'd better make our protagonist a Middle Westerner and just knock the g's off the ends of his present participles.

Anyway, the quaint old rural character (hereinafter referred to as QORC) says there's been some trouble up "to" the church. No need to specify what denomination the old chap is a member of: many readers are surprisingly touchy on the subject. Just make him convey that there's clerical trouble and plenty of it in the neighborhood. You ask him what trouble, for you don't know anything about any trouble up "to" any church, having just returned after a long absence. (Just what YOU are doing in this story won't be apparent until the very

(*Continued on Page 3, Col. 1*)

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THE DILEMMA or SILENUS IN DIXIE

(Continued from Page 2, Col. 5)

end. Meantime, confine yourself to an occasional "I said" or "I could not force back a smile.")

All right. QORC says there's been trouble up "to" the church. You say what trouble. He says about the new preacher. You say what new preacher. He says the new preacher they got after old Dr. Fessenden died. (Right here there should be a good gag like "Why, I didn't even know old Dr. Fessenden was sick"—only better.) Then QORC says the new preacher (let's call him a Mr. Pastorius for the time being) was a fine, handsome youngster, just out of divinity school. Right off he made a great hit with the thirty-four members of his tiny congregation. The men liked him for his virile ways and his eloquence. The women liked him for his eloquence and his virile ways. He was popular all over the village for his consideration. "And preech (an' pareeuch)! Why, man, you never heerd sich preechin' (whah, mayun, you-all nevuh huhd sich pareechun')!"

Well, one Sunday after the service, a young couple, Zeke and Flossie, waited until all the others had gone, in order to speak to Mr. Pastorius in private. After a good deal of hesitation they confided to him that they were childless, although they wanted kiddies in the worst possible way. Would he pray for them? He said he would be more than glad to. And sure enough, a short while later their prayers were answered. A short while after the answering of these prayers, another couple, Eph and Mirandy, spoke with Mr. Pastorius in private after the service. Their trouble was the same. Would he pray for them? He'd be delighted. A short while later their prayers were answered. A short while after the answering of this second set of prayers a third couple, Si and Lily, conferred with Mr. Pastorius. Would he pray for them? You bet. A short while later *their* prayers were answered.

Flossie and Mirandy and Lily met. They started to talk and pretty soon they got to giggling. (This scene should be treated with great delicacy.) And before you could say Jack Robinson, danged ef the hull thing wa'n't all over town.

Wall, the congregation, consisting of eighteen women and sixteen men, held a meetin'. It was moved by Zeke, and seconded by Eph, that Mr. Pastorius be dismissed for conduct unbecomin' a Christian and a preacher. The motion was lost by two votes. (There is a place for some lively comedy at these meetin's.)

The meetin' adjourned and that night the men folks went down in their cellars (sullahs) and fetched up logs and beat their women. Such goin's on for a hull week you never heerd. Wall, some of 'em sure done good, 'cause next Friday night, when they held 'nuther meetin', the same motion was put, and this time it come out tie, seventeen to seventeen. The meetin' adjourned.

The men folks went home and fetched more logs out'n the cellar (sullah). Thud time was chahm, 'cause on the followin' Friday the motion wuz carried, eighteen to sixteen. Mr. Pastorius wuz rehired of his post.

Now right here comes the O. Henry. This is where YOU come in. Turning to QORC after he has finished talking, YOU say:

"Well, pap (or Cunnel or Uncle John), he's gone, hasn't he? You got rid of him, didn't you? You have a real Christian in his place now, haven't you? What's all the fuss about?"

And QORC takes out his pipe or chew and looks off over the valley or waving fields of cotton or corn and says slowly:

"Yes, thet's all true. Thet's all true. But trubbel is," he says, "trubbel iz: we just heerd today *the one-of-a-gun's got the Singer Sewin' Machine agency for this district.*"

Ah, there, Dr. Blanche Colton Williams!

COMMUNICATIONS

I

"All through life we must shake our fist at death. In the meantime know that our presence here is under the terms of a contract handed to us, and the name of that contract is injustice. That's why we have religion and love and sex and riches and "good times" — fun, they call it, and meetings and poetry and painting, metaphysics, biochemistry and theories of relativity—all to soften the implication of our contract with life. The cards are stacked, so why not smile? Knowledge is a smile; ignorance, the acid of the lemon. The lemon, however, is a cleanser. They use lime to bleach the floors in the South Seas—sweet-smelling stuff, too. And there remain the pyramids and the rose and granite and the sky, and all of us moving about—seeking."

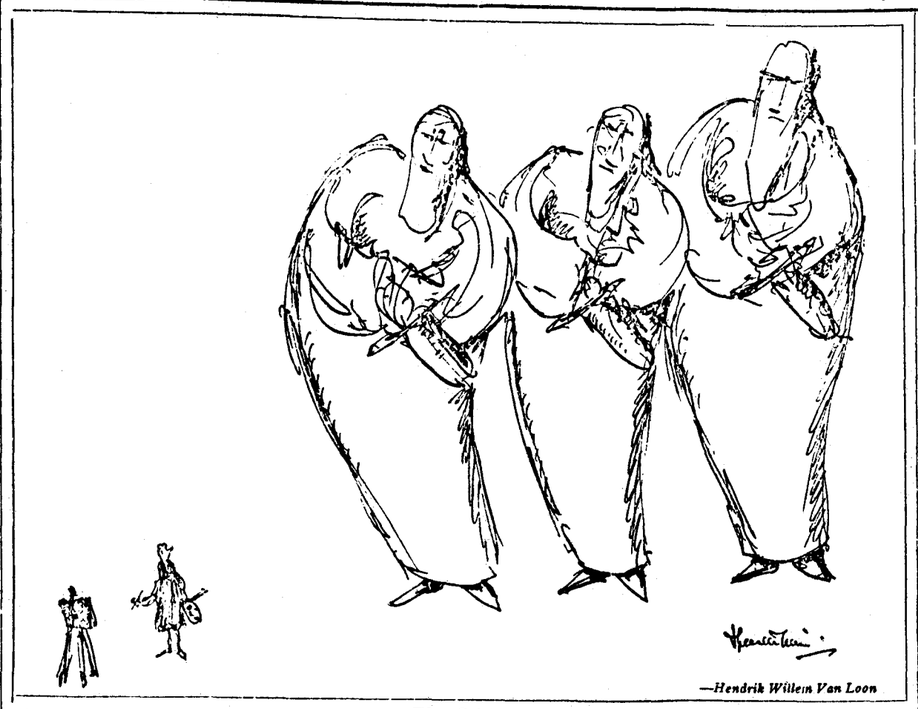
—Jerome Blum.

SERVANTS OF GOD
No. 13

Associated Press Dispatch to the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin:

SPRINGFIELD, MO.—The Rev. Sharon C. Inman, 35, will be cited for trial before the Ozarks Presbytery here on charges of immorality and conduct unbecoming a minister as the outgrowth of his infatuation for 20-year-old Ezia "Patsy" Holdridge. Announcement of the trial and charges was made by the Rev. M. F. Cowden. Whereabouts of the minister and the girl who was taken into the Inman home by Mrs. Gladys Baker Inman are a mystery.

Mrs. Inman, after a month of entertaining the blonde sweetheart of her husband in an attempt to break up the affair, took them in a motor car to a highway west of here and let them out. Since then nothing has been heard from the former Cave Springs Presbyterian preacher.



—Hendrik Willem Van Loon

The Critics

ARS IN LUTETIA

Snapshot of a Racket

by JOHN CAMPBELL

THERE are those wintry days when all available recital space in New York is completely filled by aspiring native musicians clamoring for an American début. Posters, announcing these appearances, are of uniform pattern and combine praise from society dowagers with lavish encomiums from the leading Paris newspapers.

For example, they herald the triumph of Miss Susan Thompson, soprano, of Ottumwa, Iowa, at a recital given the previous Winter at the Salle Chopin. Mlle. Thompson gives her New York program and is noticed to the extent of four lines in the press on the following morning. Nothing more is heard of her *"talent extraordinaire"* until two years later, when she sings "Sylvia" from the Des Moines radio station previous to marrying and settling down in Ottumwa, where occasionally she sings in the Methodist choir on Sundays.

She has had her fling. A public subscription of Iowa musical devotees sent her abroad for a year's study in Italy and then augmented this fund for a year in Paris. Toward the close of the latter period, Miss Thompson was introduced to Mrs. E. Berry Wall, or Mrs. Harry Symes Lehr, and the records don't disclose whether her Paris début was made at one of Mrs. Wall's Wednesday Morning Musicales, at the American Women's Club, or at one of Mrs. Lehr's Wednesday afternoons, in the Rue des Saints-Pères. It was observed, however, that frequently thereafter her activities were chronicled in the social columns of the Paris editions of the *New York Herald* and *Chicago Tribune*.

The next step would take place on a dull January afternoon, when there wasn't a possible interview in the latest ship-list, and when the city editor of one of the two American papers would commission a groaning reporter to interview Miss Thompson about her future plans. Following much cordial embarrassment and a few champagne cocktails at Cuvillier's Bar, Miss Thompson would break down and confess that she had been called to the Opéra Comique. She was to be signed for the interseason weeks.

Her début was planned in "Louise," which was to be followed by "Tosca," "La Bohème," "Madame Butterfly" and possibly "Pelléas et Mélisande"—depending on how rapidly she could learn the rôles. Next morning the meteoric rise to fame of the young lady would be told on the front pages and society leaders of the American colony, after an aspirin or two, would wearily grab check books to budget the cost of the new American *artiste*. The far-reaching organizations of Mrs. Lehr, Mrs. Wall, Mme. Ganna Walska and the American Women's Club would inaugurate a "pep drive" to "put her over in a big way" and try to sell at least the required 250 seats for "Louise."

The expert advertising solicitors of the Paris press would then call on Mlle. Thompson and hint at the good effect created on the Opéra Comique by large ads, and how fame would resultingly be hers. They did not mention the other 3,621 American sopranos who had sung at the Comique and then retreated hastily to far-off regions; they merely pointed to the *succès fou* of Mary Garden, Grace Moore, Mary McCormick and Hope Hampton, and how these artists had all ordered big displays.

Small announcements would then appear frequently to remind Americans "to support American genius" and attachés of the American Embassy would flip coins to see who had to ruin a dinner for the official representation at "Louise."

La Thompson might both astonish and delight her hopeful supporters at home by wiring for $1,000 to defray the expenses of a début and subsequent recital. But upon receipt of the mazuma, a Mrs. Perkins, one of the singer's more enthusiastic patronesses, would promptly hustle her to Lanvin's. There, a few simple frocks would be ordered whose cost was greater than the entire Comique production—and Mrs. Perkins would collect a handsome twenty per cent. Then perchance the Comique would remind Mlle. Thompson that 250 orchestra seats would hardly repay the house for staging a "gala", and she should ask her friends to take the mezzanine and first balcony as well. Although she is only to receive 250 francs ($10 at par)—all this should be charged down to experience.

"Louise" is a fairly safe bet for the tryout of American talent on non-subscription nights. The gallery fills itself and, once "Depuis le Jour" is surmounted, the chorus and second string performers take care of appeasing any protest that isn't too violent. The "gala" is given at nine, so the American colony may arrive before the close of the second act. Attendants at the Comique adore these Transatlantic soirées as everyone gets well tipped, especially for placing coats and wraps to the side so that hasty departures may be facilitated. The weary social leaders feel they are doing their duty as "expatriates" and bow for recognition to the society editors, while their male companions retire to a little *bistro* in the Rue Marivaux to consume healthy quantities of Martell.

Reporters and barmen are given seats, and the press services send over office-boys in case any outbreaks may justify a cabled yarn. Flowers are ordered in profusion and the final curtain finds La Thompson embowered in more floral tributes than Frieda Leider receives for 500 Isoides.

Several of the more important musical critics waddle backstage during the performance and are corralled by male friends of the young singer. Palms are greased with a few hundred-franc notes but, lest anyone think this be bribery, it is given as "dinner money." "In appreciation for what you have done," the octogenarian musical experts are told, "I want you to have a dinner on me. Of course, Miss Thompson would be furious, so don't breathe a word of it to her. Just give her a break. We know she's nervous but then—she's so young."

Next morning, members of the American colony are accustomed to reading: "Young American girl scores triumph—American managers cabling for immediate engagements in New York.

II

The performance at the Salle Favart nicked Miss Thompson and her friends to the tune of about $1,500. And strangely enough she is never asked to sing those performances of "Tosca," "La Bohème," and "Madame Butterfly." There is invariably a convenient change of management or *some* reason why the agreements can not be fulfilled.

Knowing, however, that she has a recital and possible backing in view, the Paris-American press continues to support her.

More paid advertising. More hooey gratis. The managing editors are invited to lunch by one of her backers. What can the city editors, reporters or critics do when they are told the *artiste* is a friend or client of the managing editor? Mr. Irving Schwerke of *The Chicago Tribune* thinks highly enough of Miss Thompson to include her and a backer in the next soirée musicale at his studio, while M. Louis Schneider exhausts his superlatives in praising her in *The New York Herald*. This veteran scribbles his reviews in French on the back of club stationery and, no matter who the *artiste*, they usually run:

Une vraie artiste qui a chanté avec un goût indisputable. Une très jolie jeune femme qui a ravi l'assistance avec sa rendition des chansons de Schubert, Bach, Brahms, Ravel et Debussy. Nerveuse au commencement, elle a néanmoins crée une furore dans la saile avec sa dernière groupe de chansons américaines et elle a été très chaleureusement applaudie."

Being more of a home-town affair, the recital is less filled with éclat. Students and elder members of the colony go in street garb on cut-rate tickets or passes for which they loudly resent having to pay the four francs tax to the French government.

The usherettes are the only French people in the hall, while nary a critic can be found. The latter have called in the afternoon for the program, received their dinner money for the next week, and have gone to see the latest Garbo film.

Their raves this time are more quotable. That is what is desired. They are shorter, because isn't this the final appearance of the American girl? There won't be any more paid-for advertising unless she finds a new backer on the Riviera and, even so, that would afford the dinners to their confrères in the Midi. So why bother? She served their purpose. They served hers. And so one later reads the formal announcement that "Miss Susan Thompson of Ottumwa, Iowa, has gone to Vichy to recuperate before returning for an active season in America."

She fades from the scene and Miss Delilah Percival of Cheyenne arrives in Paris from a year in Italy. Somehow she meets Mrs. Harry Symes Lehr and Mrs. E. Berry Wall . . . and . . . teas . . . women's clubs . . . students' ateliers . . . opéra comique . . . salle chopin . . . vichy . . . america.

III

Likewise, one reads frequently of "an artist newly returned from France, where he held many successful exhibitions in leading galleries and whose work is now being considered for the Luxembourg . . . etc." Closer examination of the shows in which the artist participated in France reveals that he exhibited at the American Women's Club and was one of the Americans at Gwen Le Gallienne's show at the Galerie Zak.

He once paid for a Right Bank gallery for two weeks because his roommate could get him a good rate, if he went in with a Soviet etcher and a Czecho-Slovakian sculptor, and guaranteed to supply the whiskey and champagne at the vernissage. He didn't receive any notice in the Paris-American press, however, as his budget wouldn't permit any purchasing of advertising space and the gallery in which he exhibited still owed the papers money.

His name nevertheless did appear in the lists of *The New York Herald* when he showed in the "Salon des Indépendants." The only artists to receive mention were the Americans and he was listed as "a most talented young painter whose dexterous use of color complements his highly decorative choice of background, noticeably in his pictures of the Provence." This particular artist was a trifle perturbed by the comment, as his single contribution was a black and white drawing of cats and he had never been outside of Paris. By the time he returned to America he had remembered to stop off at Toulon and do a water color landscape so that he might use the highly valuable mention.

Another example of quackery in the arts was to be noted when one of our leading American permanent galleries sent this notice to the American press: "Mr. ——, one of the trustees of the —— Museum of Art, has just returned from a lengthy tour of Europe during which he acquired a number of the best paintings recently done by representative Americans in Paris, Munich, and Florence."

The truth was that Mr. —— went abroad with kidney trouble and, when not confined to his suite at the Meurice, was commuting to Bad Nauheim. He had been allotted $1,000 with which he was to pick up a hundred canvases to fill the bare walls of the recently opened X room.

He went to the —— and —— Galleries in Paris and told them to gather all the American artists of social prominence together and from each secure any old work he could spare. The artists were to contribute to the advertising which would help the gallery pay off its back bills.

Once again the various social factions of Paris were marshalled to "put the show over with a bang." Mrs. Lehr brought her crowd, Elsa Maxwell had her coterie, Gilbert White arrived with his neophytes, the American Women's Club arrived *en masse*, Mrs. E. Berry Wall was present with her pet chow. Posters heralding the event could be found in Harry's Bar (unpaid) and at the Select, in Montparnasse (tax 4 frs.)

To be represented in the American collection the artists paid about $100 apiece and had received ten dollars each for their canvasses.

Our authors and playwrights are others who contribute greatly to the support of a whole horde of fly-by-night French translators and publishers who will agree to any literary chicanery for a price.

An American wrote a few poems last Spring and was induced by a French publisher to have them issued in Paris. He paid the expenses and the newspaper advertising, which also proclaimed all the other books brought out by the house. This he didn't know until his book was published, just as he didn't realize that he would inevitably be compared to Shelley by the advertising-greased press.

New York newspaper book sections were extremely kind to a unique travel book about France which an American woman wrote last year. She asked me, in Paris, to find out about a French translation, and I was told it could be arranged for 10,000 francs. I then inquired about reviews and was told that she would, of course, have to pay for considerable advertising—*and for the critical space as well.* Royalties from a record sale would bring her about 25 per cent of the investment.

A leading American playwright—and by no means an exception to the rule—was charged four or five different ways to have one of his plays performed in Paris. Under various pseudonyms, his French theatrical patron was able to collect divers sums for translation, adaptation, production rights, inclusion in the lists of recognized foreign authors in France, and representation.

When a group of American players went to Paris several years ago, one of the best known Paris men-about-town told the manager that for several thousand francs he could secure the smartest French opening crowd of the year, which would make a decidedly good impression on the press. It did. The idea of attending a Repétition Générale and the promise of a few free *verres de champagne* and taxi money drew a smartly dressed audience of Parisian notables, who were unstinted in their praise of a play of which they understood next to nothing.

US WHITE GODS

by THOMAS WOOD

EDUCATED Asiatics are to most Western minds exactly comparable to educated bugs; like fleas trained to haul chariots, or any organism carefully extracted from its obscure natural function and, by some amusing legerdemain, made to go through the motions of another organism.

One has only to watch a Western audience listening to a neat and grinning Japanese, or to an impassioned Hindu, to catch in epitome the attitude of the typical Occidental to the exceptional Oriental. The populace of England and America has for them the same indulgent admiration that it has for small boys in miniature dress suits, for pictures of kittens in overalls in the Sunday rotogravure sections, for Singer Midgets, and for fat ladies in rompers.

Dignity is the least expected resource of an Asiatic who has us white gods to thank for his *Kultur*. It seems highly unreasonable to find a saffron-colored bachelor of arts appearing something less than eager to give us the full details of his boyhood, his father's bank account and his own love-life, when we go to the trouble of asking him. But us white gods are finding that the Asiatics persist, with deceptive tact, in this very diffidence.

Until recently, of course, it was the eager little Oriental who did the questioning; partly because he was curious, partly from a desire to improve his verbs and deliquidate his R's. Now, however, a traveler in the Far East, say on a steamship, discovers that Indians, Burmans and Japanese quite apparently prefer the company of their own kind to the fumbling patronage of the whites. This is not because of any Jim Crow complex. A sense of superiority, I suspect, is the reason. And I further suspect they have more title to it than we ever did.

On the occasions when East and West do meet, in the smoking-room or train compartment, a gentleman from Indiana or from the Genesee Valley is more than apt to find himself taking first lessons in American folk art, Dakota waterpower development, New England freight differentials and the fine art of the cocktail, the while he is singularly silent on Japanese *No* plays, racial assimilation in the Malay Peninsula, and the effect of Zoroaster on Manichæism.

Yet the turgid silences which fall upon the mixed company are not due so much to simple ignorance on the part of our Westerner as to his inbred disability to be simple, inquisitive and retentive enough to ask a pursuing question. A sort of halation from his own white epidermis gets in his eyes. He feels quite sure, though in an increasingly vague way, that he is the superior in this *tête-à-tête*. The educated Asiatic doesn't feel he is himself superior; he *knows* it.

This is an awkward situation. Doubtless as a result of a few hundred such ungrateful encounters, the Colonial British have determined that they will show the beggars. If they can't draw the line in talents, they'll manage to draw it in pounds, shillings and pence. And they'll thank you to help them draw it.

II

Thus, no tourist can traverse even a small part of the Far East without receiving extensive and highly confidential counsel to the effect that he had better stick to first-class travel: otherwise he will have to meet "the natives" on equal terms. This counsel comes, of course, from tourist agents. The humble skepticism which I applied to my examination of South Asia and Polynesia led me to favor my purse at the expense of my reputation and book second-class passages almost entirely, by rail and by ship. I did so on a passage from Calcutta to Rangoon. True enough, just as Mr. Cook's counter-jumper had said, I had to eat in the same dining-room with a Burman and a Hindu. The Burman had taken honors at Oxford; the Hindu had a Ph.D. from Harvard and was on his way to Johns Hopkins. The fare I paid not only meant that I was forced to "meet" them, it also meant that I had to miss the refined society of the first-class passengers, two of whose brightest gems were an Oregon promoter keeping two jumps ahead of extradition, and a courier (*né gigolo*) who had been discharged by the widow who hired him and was returning to New York without an anatomical care in the world or a brain in his head.

In India especially are the British fighting desperately to reassert themselves, even if only in terms of pounds sterling. There are, for instance, no medium-priced hotels. A part of the new Colonial system is the enhancement of prestige, and every Englishman feels he must live, if not like a lord, at least like a baronet, just to keep the natives in their place. As a result of this endeavor to uphold the god-given station in life, the casual visitor, who usually doesn't give a damn, has to live either in luxury or in a lodging house. It is difficult to see, since labor is so cheap (and supplies should be), why any such disparity is necessary. Inevitably one must conclude that it is simply a class restriction.

All this is not to say that the whole thing is a hollow sham, a clever hypocrisy. The British believe in it as ardently as they believe in Burberrys.

I had made the acquaintance of a British General, some thirty years in Indian service, and it happened that I was starting North from Bombay on the same day that he was starting back to his post on the frontier. He suggested we keep each other company for as long as our routes were the same. I told him it would be a pleasure but I simply couldn't afford to travel first-class; in fact, I was doing well to manage second.

"But I've got to travel first!" he expostulated. "Who ever heard of a white man going second?"

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US WHITE GODS

(Continued from Page 3, Col. 5)

With a little more argument I got him to look into it, and when the Punjab Mail left, the General was in a second-class compartment. Save that it was over the wheels, the compartment had every comfort that a higher fare could have bought. A third man joined us, and when the General found he was not only white but a Cambridge graduate he was pleased as a child. He broke a long silence with a profound philosophical comment. "Just think," he said; "We're traveling just as fast as the first-class. . . ."

I first encountered this happy spirit of snobbishness within the Empire family on the boat from London to Bombay. The vessel had been converted to one class, carrying only tourist passengers. Everyone aboard had the theoretical run of the ship. The theory countenanced no *tabus*, no *verbotens*. There was, however, one little flaw in the system. It didn't work.

Sea-going democracies are no more successful than the other kinds. In our little democracy there were two dining saloons, one forward and the other aft. Price alone separated the sheep from the goats. We, aft, were the untouchables. Yet among us there was no reckless camaraderie, no humorous acceptance of the ludicrous distinction. Instead, a number of the "afts" dressed for dinner in the poorly disguised hope that in the evening promenade they would be mistaken for "forwards."

The discrimination nearly became an open insurrection when a sports tournament committee was chosen. A meeting was called for eleven o'clock one morning, and when the aft delegation arrived they found the meeting over and the officers elected. In the evening, prompted by a bumptious commercial traveler who delivered a Hyde Park harangue about "spawtsmanship" and "pawticipation," a protest went to the captain and after much tut-tutting he called another election.

Without exception the same committee was re-elected and the weasel was roundly defeated for the secretaryship. The meeting very nearly went to pot when a mischievous subaltern stood up and said that since there were some two dozen Hindus aboard he should think they ought to be represented *also*.

One little weakness in this convenient demarcation is that anyone with an adequate currency can buy first-class tickets and luxury suites. No Cockney ticket clerk in Calcutta is going to tell a swarthy maharajah that he will have to take his rubies, his princelings and his wives into the steerage. In the matter of travel at least caste is not a question of epiderms but of ciphers after the pound sterling mark. That is, until the gang-plank is up. Then we return to the normal style and the maharajah, his princelings and his wives are treated with the contempt that befits their pigmentation.

III

It would seem, alas, that certain elements in the Orient are being hardly held to such articles of faith as the above instances represent. At least, recent perspicuous notes to Geneva from Tokyo, and certain militant defections in India, point that way.

Of course it is barely possible that they have bitten a few of the coins of prestige us white gods have passed off on them and found them to contain considerable base metal. In the same figure, Aldous Huxley suggests that "we are accepted much as paper money is accepted, because there is a general belief that we are worth something. Our value is not intrinsic, but borrowed from the opinion of the world. We live and rule on credit, and are respected, not so much because we are really formidable as because there exists a convention that we should be respected. The less fortunate majority is carefully educated in this useful opinion."

Yes, the British are willing to "do everything" for the Asiatics—give them highways, railroads, educate them in public schools, offer them health facilities, hire them in business—but they must stay at a long arm's length.

The ultimate word on the subject was supplied when a small group of whites on a peninsular ship was standing forward at the rail watching with morbid intentness the apparent misery of the deck passengers. Burnoosed Arabs, emaciated Hindus, sweaty Chinese were living the full round of their daily lives on the steel decks and hatch covers, as undisturbed by lack of space as by lack of privacy. They had bought only deck passage and had to bring bedding, utensils, food, even their own firewood. Their elbows were in each others' ribs, and it was a fortunate pilgrim who had space enough to sleep at full length.

Their dignity was impeccable. They read their holy writ, or slept, or looked out over the placid sea, and ignored masterfully the rudeness of the first-class passengers. After watching them for two days, I intimated to a young lady from Sydney that we whites would hardly be as admirable in the same circumstances.

She answered: "Oh, yes. But then, they don't *feel*, do they? I mean, *really* feel?"

The Editors, having closely scrutinized Roxy's various femme nue advertisements of such films as "India Speaks," etc., no longer wonder where the Rockefeller Centre is.

Industrialism: Muscle Shoals and Child Labor.

The deflated Editors of The American Spectator exhaustedly suggest the inflation of confidence, faith, hope, duty, charity, love, respect, and honor

LECTURE PLATFORM

by ERNEST BOYD

The scene is the Women's Literary Club, Morristown, N. J

The subject is "The Significance of D. H. Lawrence."

The scene is the Little Group of Group Thinkers, 384 East 2nd St.

The subject is "Marxism in Taos."

The scene is the Debs Memorial Hall.

The subject is "Lady Chatterley's Proletarian Lover."

The scene is the McMillan Theatre, Columbia University.

The subject is "D. H. Lawrence and Shakespeare: A Contrast."

The scene is The Poetry Society of Charleston, S. C.

The subject is "D. H. Lawrence South of the Mason and Dixon Line."

The scene is the Book and Play Lunch Club.

The subject is "My Recollections of D. H. Lawrence."

The scene is the Y.M.H.A., Brooklyn.

The subject is "D. H. Lawrence in the Light of Hitlerism."

The scene is the Dutch Treat Club.

The subject is "Some Impersonations of D. H. Lawrence."

The scene is the National Arts Club.

The subject is "Who Really Knew D. H. Lawrence?"

The scene is Smith College.

The subject is "D. H. Lawrence and the Higher Education of Lady Chatterley."

The scene is City College, New York.

The subject is "D. H. Lawrence as an Introvert."

The scene is Hunter College, New York.

The subject is "Women in the Life and Works of D. H. Lawrence."

The scene is the New School for Social Research.

The subject is "D. H. Lawrence and the Thirty-nine Dramatic Situations."

II

The speaker is always the same—whatever his name may be.

His speech usually runs as follows:

D. H. Lawrence . . . Middleton Murry . . . Mabel Dodge . . . Tony . . . Brett . . . Catherine Carswell . . . Nobody ever was as close to Lawrence as I . . . a beautiful soul . . . a virile personality . . . Norman Douglas . . . Capri . . . Sons and Lovers . . . Trespasser . . . The Rainbow . . . a great crisis in the development of a sensitive artist . . . Incomparable essays on classic American literature . . . escape . . . His Mother . . . Rapallo . . . Bad Nauheim . . . Frieda . . . The English Review . . . the son of a Nottinghamshire miner . . . coarse fellow, his father . . . his Mother's love . . . Why did Middleton Murry kiss him? . . . Nobody knows . . . His letters . . . edited by Aldous Huxley . . . a beautiful personality . . . I can still see his beard . . . and those stallions . . . the Plumed Serpent . . . the potent gamekeeper . . . the impotent author . . . the greatest artist of our time . . . James Joyce . . . e. e. cummings . . . Gertrude Stein . . . Sylvia Beach.

III

And now, ladies and gentlemen, if there are any questions you would like to ask . . .

Is it true that William Faulkner admires Mickey Mouse?

As a Marxian, what I would like to know is how you reconcile "Lady Chatterley's Lover" with the law of diminishing returns?

What do you think of the Abbé Dimnet?

Is it true that Bernard Shaw has never had a love affair?

What do you suggest the Women's Club of Morristown can do to make literature more popular in New Jersey?

Why did D. H. Lawrence not shave?

Ought I to spend my Summer vacation in Taos? My husband and I. . . .

Do you think that the Pulitzer prizes were fairly awarded?

If you were going to Europe this Summer, would you go to Majorca?

I have never read D. H. Lawrence, but I'd like to know what the speaker thinks of Ellen Glasgow.

What is your opinion of the art of Philip Guedalla?

When Hugh Walpole lectured here he said that he adored the South. Does the speaker agree with him?

Has the New Humanism brought about a revival in American literature?

Ought I to get a divorce? . . . What do you think of companionate marriage? . . . of birth control? . . .

Will the speaker tell us something about D. H. Lawrence's wife's first husband? . . . What, exactly, was the matter with Lawrence? . . . Had he any children? . . . Why not? . . . Explain, then, why he was so attractive to women. . . .

Is there any literary significance in Lawrence's interest in stallions and serpents? . . .

Tell us about his private life . . .

Do you think that "Lady Chatterley's Lover" was autobiographical? . . .

Tell us . . . Tell us. . . .

THE MARTYR

by THEODORE DREISER

I was a Christian martyr—
In the arena at Rome. I stood up
Proud of what I thought was true,
A Christian,
Wiser than my fellows
Or more blessed,
Being chosen of Christ
And able,
Because of my faith,
My erring yet strengthening belief,
To stand erect
And not cringe
Or fail,
Even though a hundred thousand faces above me
Blanched at my impending fate
The while the emperor
And his women and courtiers
Drank cooling drinks,
Gazing amused
Upon the deaths
Of such as I.

But I was wrong
In my estimate
Of myself.
For what was I?
A mere mathematical,
Or shall I say,
Electro-chemical formula
Or force,
Physically constructed of dust,
Water,
A little air.
And calculated to function
For a limited time.
No more than an idea,
A notion, of that day
And life,
Though I thought of myself as real.

Eyes of one parent,
Nose of another,
Ears and mouth of a grandfather,
Or of a great-grandfather
Repeated
As in others of my kin.
Notions of this country or that,
This theory or that,
A thin
Evanescent
Thing of things
And *all* unreal.

* * *

And yet
There
Before me
As I thought I was,
A Numidian lion,
Lithe and hungry,
And it approached,
And my *faith* strengthened me.
The while I feared
And froze;
So that I stood up,
And as it neared me,
And at last sprang.
I declared
That Jesus lived
And that His word was true,
And that *I* was then passing to join *Him*
And those who believed in Him,
And should therefore inherit
Eternal life.

* * *

But I say to you it was nothing—
My faith was nothing—
An illusion—
And that life is nothing—
An illusion,
Neither real nor unreal.
I had but a quasi-soul,
As have you.
Your nose, like mine,
Of one parent
Or another,
Of this ancestor or that.
Your laugh, as mine,
Of your grandfather,
Grandmother,
Or some formula
Behind and beyond them again.
Two chromosomes
Instead of four
In your mother's womb,
As in that of mine,
Having made a *man* of you
Instead of a woman,
As they made a man of me,
Of so many.

For look you!
Answer!
What are we?
You?
I?
All men?
All things?
Shifted matter,
Disguised energy and space.
And formed
And reformed
Or recast
As any button
Or stone;
Mere lime,
Sodium,
Carbon,
Nitrogen,
Yet moving about us
(And dare we say eternally?)
As elements
In space.
Yet here and there pausing
In time
In space.
Like *Myself*
In this arena
You in your office
Or car,
Yet formulæ
Manufactured mechanisms
That come and go again
As do any machines
Never to be so reformed, perhaps,
In all time or space
Wheresoever
Howsoever.
Yet there *I* stood,
Condemned for an idea
That came upon me
As had my very form
And all else that I was,
Out of nothing,
From nowhere, really,
A notion of someone
Or something,
Or nothing.
A baseless mood of nothing
Vaguely moving,
Vaguely expressing itself,
Blowing about the world
Of that day,
A mere figment of rumor
And never to be so formulated again.

* * *

And yet
For that
I stood up
Another unwitting formula,
As unreal as myself,
A Numidian lion, no less,
Before me,
An imaginary "emperor"
Above me,
Staring at my imagined doom,
Sharing my imagined state.
And I
Led
And strengthened
By "the spirit",
As I thought,
Declaring my "Saviour"—
And as I fell,
Bleeding,
From the claws
Of my imaginary lion,
I believed that I had a soul
And that I was to live forever
As I then was—
I.

* * *

Laugh, brothers, laugh!

DRAMATIS PERSONAE IBSENISENSIS

by SEAN O'CASEY

"If there had been no Ibsen, there would have been no Pinero, no Shaw, no St. John Hankin, no Miles Malleson, perhaps not even a Frederick Lonsdale. France would have had no Brieux, Germany no Georg Kaiser or Ernst Toller, Italy no Pirandello, America no Eugene O'Neill."

—Hannan Swaffer.

IBSEN stood still and thought, thought as he stood still in the snow, on the highest peak of the tallest mountain in the most northern corner of northern Norway. He stood still a long, long time, and thought long and thought deeply. It was the middle of the six-month night of the northern land, and, turning his back on the green, purple, and golden plumes of the Midnight Sun, he faced forward into the darkness. I must have more, I must have more, he murmured; I must have a crowd of kids. I must have them there, here, and everywhere. The prophet had spoken, saying I, Hannan, declare unto thee that thy seed shall be even as the sands of the desert for multitude.

Then Ibsen turned himself round and bowed low, three times did he bow down to the green, purple, and golden plumes of the Midnight Sun, saying as he bowed, Farewell, great colored candle, companion to the northern darkness, for I go now on many far and toilsome journeys to achieve that which was, and is not, but shall be in the days to come.

He bent down and tested the straps of his skis, tightened the belt round his middle, pulled down his fur cap over his eyes and ears, while a terrible look of determination came over his face. He plunged his alpine stock into the ice and gave himself a fierce push forward. Away he went down the slippery slope of the mountain peak. Quicker and quicker he went, one thousand seven hundred and sixty yards to the mile, and three hundred and sixty-five and a quarter miles to the hour. Over crevasses, cliffs and mighty fiords.

To the edge of the land he came, and swept over the nose of Norway with a mighty bound, which landed him with a gentle bump right in the middle of the heart of Mid-Lothian. He tramped over the bracken and the fern; wandered through the heather and the gorse, till he came to the borders of a lovely lake. He saw thousands of butterflies changing into women fairies, and back again into women; and thousands of bees changing into fairymen, and back again into bees. Suddenly he felt sharp pangs of pain, and, sinking down on the bonnie, bonnie bank of Loch Lomond, he begat Barrie. He gave a look at the kid, and was silent. Suddenly the little fellow began to sing "The Blue Bonnets Are Over the Border," and Ibsen hastily wrapped him up in tartan ribbon, put a lump of candy in his little fist, lifted him up, planked him in the corner of a kail-yard, and fled away down the lanes and the roads till he was down the hills and up the dales, till he was well over the border.

He goose-stepped into a city of fiery furnaces and flame, and in the middle of the noise from hammers falling on red-hot steel he felt the pains of labor coming on him again, so sinking down, he begat Hankin. Ibsen looked at the kid for a moment and murmured: "It's a little better than the last, anyhow, but not good enough to persuade me to waste any time in nursing."

Then he visited a store and bought a natty lounge suit, and a dress suit with tails, for he wanted to be fully prepared if special pains should come upon him. Carrying them in a box on his back, he walked and tramped and trudged for miles and miles, till he staggered at last into London. Feeling very hungry, he hurried into a corner shop and had a good meal. Then he went into the wash and brush up department, where he put on his dress suit with tails. Then he returned to his place, had a glass of port, and, while smoking a cigarette, without a pang of pain, he begat Pinero on his right hand and Miles Malleson on his left hand. He went out, engaged a nurse, hired a pram, bought a little Eton suit for Pinero, a little plus-four suit for Malleson, packed the kids in the pram, and sent them off to join the Sunday morning parade in Hyde Park.

Strolling off in the opposite direction, he looked into the shop windows, and suddenly found himself in a huge building, crowded with excited men, some speaking, some sitting down, and many lying down asleep. He noticed that each speaker, as he began and as he ended his speech, made over his breast the sign of the cross of St. George. He saw, too, that when all had spoken, and the last man ended his speech, the first speaker began all over again. He asked an attendant boy scout if the talk ever ended, and the boy scout answered: never. Ibsen then asked what it all meant, and the boy scout answered that it meant nothing, but was simply an never-ending hymn to intellectual beauty.

After many days, Ibsen crept out of the place on his hands and knees, murmuring that there was no chance of a fertilizing air there, rising to his feet and running when he reached the gates, just as Big Ben, by mistake, boomed out the Angelus.

Speeding down Whitehall, such terrible spasms came into his belly as made him throw himself flat on the ground and yell for the police. Policemen rushed over and blew their whistles for more policemen, who came running, and they all rubbed Ibsen up, and rubbed him down, telephoned for an ambulance, flung him in when it came, and hustled him off to hospital, where he was put to bed and surrounded by many doctors, some saying it was a wish-fulfillment dream, some that it was syncopated blood-pressure, and one or two that it was pure imagination. The pain got worse, and they gave him chloroform. Then Ibsen heaved a mighty heave and begat Shaw, which, when the doctors saw, they made off, saying that if they had known what was coming, they wouldn't have lifted a finger to help. The kid refused to be nursed, saying that he was bloody well able to take care of himself, and asked for pen, ink, and paper to jot down a few remarks about past, present, and future tenses.

Lawyers in crowds came and whispered to Ibsen that if he took their advice, he'd slip off the first chance he got, for his latest creation'd get him into serious trouble before long. So Ibsen, frightened, slipped on his clothes, gathered his belongings together, and slunk away, while the little Shaw was writing a long letter to Man and a postscript to God

As Ibsen was hurrying along, a cardinal who had heard of him, stopped him and blessed him; lighted a holy candle before him, and rang a holy bell behind him, blessed him again, saying, increase and multiply and replenish the earth with dramatists, Ibsen, that the words of Hannan, the prophet, may be fulfilled. The blessing bucked Ibsen up tremendous, and he hurried into Italy, where he begat Pirandello; hastened out of Italy into Germany, where in the evening he begat Georg Kaiser, and during the fourth hour of the day after, he begat Toller.

Without a minute's rest or a second's hesitation, Ibsen then ran like hell down to the nearest seaport, journeying up and journeying down the quays till he found a trim little schooner just hauling up its anchor with a heave and a heave yo ho, yo, before it slipped out and away for the shore of America. So hitching up his trousers, he gave a great leap and went flying over the gunwale, with a heave ho and a heave yo ho, and to keep himself fit, he raced round and round the poop, turning, when he felt giddy, to race the reverse way round the prow. He jumped over the taffrail and back, and over and back again. The sailors cheered as they stood up to the winds and up to the waves, and reefed and furled and set the sails of the trim little schooner, which ploughed on and on till at last, on a Winter's day, she crept into the harbor of New York. Without waiting for the gangway to be put down, Ibsen jumped on to the landing stage, and ran all the way to the woods, where, under a lofty elm tree, in roaring spasms of pain, he gave birth to Eugene O'Neill.

Ibsen wiped the sweat from his brow, and looked down on the lusty kid who cried with a loud cry; and Ibsen, looking at the kid again, murmured to himself, saying, I've done enough, be damit, I've done enough to last me for the rest of me life.

He went back to New York, entered a store and bought a second-hand frock coat and tall silk hat, took passage on board a great liner that brought him back to his native land. As he came down the gangway, a long thin man, covered with a long black cloak, and wearing a wide-brimmed black hat, came over to him, chucked him under the chin, slapped him on the back and said: "Well done, well done, old sport; thou hast done all that the prophet, Hannan, an aitch an ay an en another en another ay an another en, 'annan, commanded thee to do. Henceforth all majesty, might, dominion and power be Ibsen's, forever and forever more, amen."

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR
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